

Summer Holiday Childcare Sufficiency

In Norfolk, schools have remained open continuously, including over Easter and half-term, offering valuable provision for critical workers, vulnerable and other eligible groups.

In June, the government confirmed that schools will not have to remain open over the summer for the provision of childcare places for critical work families and that school holiday wraparound care for school age children and formal childcare would restart.

Since then there has been no direction formally from the government for schools to offer provision over the summer and the expectation is that term dates for schools still stand. Some school leaders may be considering using their catch-up premium to provide summer school activities for their pupils. Where this is the case, they have the flexibility, discretion and autonomy to decide how they want to do this.

Further guidance around summer wrap around provision has recently been published. Providers will use this guidance to establish how and if they will be able to work in line with the protective measures set out. Providers who open should implement this guidance from the end of summer term, when state schools in their local area have closed. Until then, while schools are open in a provider's local area, they should follow the same protective measures as schools.

As a local authority, we have a statutory duty to ensure there is sufficient childcare for 0-14 year-olds, whose families wish to access childcare. We review this through an annual childcare sufficiency assessment <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/children-and-families/childcare-and-early-learning/childcare-advice-and-guidance/childcare-sufficiency>.

The Covid-19 pandemic restrictions have impacted on both the demand for and availability of childcare. We know that there may be some parts of Norfolk where it may be difficult to find childcare. The Local Authority is working in a number of ways to support families wishing to access childcare. This includes:

- Working to encourage providers to update the community directory so that parents can access an accurate reflection of childcare in their locality
- The Family Information Service (FIS) curating and maintaining a live list of provision
- Providing support through the FIS for families who cannot find childcare providers
- Working with providers to support local solutions where there is an identified need. For example, through:
 - Supporting partnership working, for example liaising with schools or other venues to support childcare providers
 - Finding financial solutions where this is a critical factor in provision being available
 - Providing health and safety guidance and support
 - Advising providers around Ofsted registration

If anyone is aware of any parents looking for childcare for school aged children over the summer holidays please signpost them to the Norfolk Community Directory <https://communitydirectory.norfolk.gov.uk/> Parents can filter and customise their search to look for **Holiday Playschemes** in their preferred location. They can click on providers' records to view their details and childcare vacancies this summer holiday. The Directory is updated daily by Family Information as they receive information from providers about their childcare offer this summer. For further support parents can contact Family Information at fis@norfolk.gov.uk

Family Learning Packs have been developed in partnership with the UEA school of Education and Lifelong Learning to provide families with creative and fun ways to continue learning over the summer. Activity ideas cover a range of subjects, themes and age ranges and are designed to support families to enjoy learning new things in everyday situations. National initiatives such as Oak National Academy will also continue to offer structured learning resources for children from Reception through to YR11.